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TAGS: [PGOV](#) [ECON](#) [EAGR](#) [EFIN](#) [ETRD](#) [AR](#)  
SUBJECT: ARGENTINA: KIRCHNERS' POLL NUMBERS PLUMMET IN WAKE  
OF FARM CRISIS

REF: A. BUENOS AIRES 842  
[1](#)B. BUENOS AIRES 834  
[1](#)C. BUENOS AIRES 829  
[1](#)D. BUENOS AIRES 828 AND PREVIOUS

[1](#)1. (SBU) The 100 day farm crisis has had a dramatic and negative effect on President Fernandez de Kirchner's (CFK) poll numbers, according to results published today by leading polling firm Poliarquia. CFK's positive image sits at 20 percent, a six percentage point drop over the previous month, and a 36 percent drop since January. Her negative image is up to 46 percent, a 34 percentage point increase since January. These numbers confirm those of a less prominent polling group, Giacobbe and Associates, published last week. Husband and former President Nestor Kirchner has fared little better; his positive number is higher at 33 percent, but this is a 14 percentage point drop in the last month. Poliarquia's poll was taken between June 2 and June 10, prior to the significant events over the last week (reftels A). One of Poliarquia's directors, Fabian Perechodnick opined that, had the poll been taken this week after these events and the polemic speeches from CFK and Nestor Kirchner, their numbers would have been even lower.

[1](#)2. (SBU) Nestor Kirchner, until fairly recently, had been the teflon man, maintaining his high positive image while his wife's numbers have steadily declined since January. His subsequent drop in the polls can be explained by his higher public profile of late: first with his assumption of the peronist party leadership in April, and then with his (actual and perceived) role in the lingering farm crisis. This is reflected in the public's response to Poliarquia's poll question: "Who is making the decisions in the government?" Thirty-four percent responded that Nestor Kirchner was making the decisions, 41 percent thought both Nestor and CFK were making the decisions, while only 19 percent replied that they believed CKF was calling the shots.

[1](#)3. (SBU) Attention is now focused on the congress where, in a joint session of the lower house's Agriculture and Budget Commissions, legislators will begin debate June 23 on the Casa Rosada's export tax/fee bill. Government officials are now saying the bill will be fully debated and there is more open talk about the possibility of modifying the draft legislation. National Vice President and President of the Senate Julio Cobos has invited governors of the 11 major soy producing provinces to the Senate -- also on June 23 -- to consult on the farm issue and the pending legislation. This move was apparently not coordinated with the Casa Rosada, and the press is reporting that pro-government governors in the group were pressured not to attend and many are backing out of the meeting. A senior PJ deputy from an agricultural part of Buenos Aires province told the Ambassador June 20 that he and many of his PJ colleagues hope to be able to conduct a

wide-ranging debate and not just to rubber stamp what the government has submitted. If all goes well, the congress can modify the bill to force a compromise to end the farm dispute. He admitted, however, that it will be a struggle to get this outcome, given hardliners on both sides of the dispute.

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